

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-19 stand rejected. Claim 1 has been amended. Reconsideration of the present application in light of the present amendment and remarks is respectfully requested.

A. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-2 and 14-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,034,488 to Reiners et al. ("Reiners") and by U.S. Patent No. 4,173,954 to Speckhart ("Speckhart"). The Examiner contends that both Reiners and Speckhart disclose the invention as recited in the original claim 1. The Examiner's assertions are respectfully traversed and reconsideration of the anticipation rejections is requested in view of the amended independent claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that Reiners does not anticipate independent claim 1 as amended, nor any claims that depend from independent claim 1. Reiners teaches a pushrod structure for an internal combustion engine with a cam follower or tappet (31) having a hollow cylindrical center portion and a substantially solid tapered portion. (See Reiners Fig. 1). By contrast, Applicants' claimed cam follower requires "the portion of the cam follower bearing the pushrod engaging surface [to be] substantially conicular and substantially hollow." Reiners does not teach a cam follower that is substantially hollow throughout the tapered, or "conicular," portion of the cam follower and cannot anticipate Applicants' claim 1.

Similarly, Applicants respectfully submit that Speckhart also fails to anticipate independent claim 1 or any claims that depend from independent claim 1. Speckhart teaches a roller tappet with a substantially hollow, cylindrical central body and a substantially solid tapered portion. (See Speckhart Fig. 8). As described above with respect to Reiners, Applicants' independent claim 1 requires "the portion of the cam follower bearing the pushrod engaging

surface [to be] substantially conicular and substantially hollow.” Speckhart does not teach a cam follower that is substantially hollow throughout the tapered or “conicular” portion of the cam follower and cannot anticipate Applicants’ claim 1.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner’s 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejections have been traversed. Accordingly, Applicants request the Examiner’s 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejections be withdrawn.

B. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 13 and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,394,843 to Decuir (“Decuir”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,272,190 to Matteo (“Matteo”). For the reasons given below, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of any combination of Decuir and Matteo.

Applicants’ independent claim 1 has been amended to contain the limitation “that the portion of the cam follower bearing the pushrod engaging surface is substantially conicular and substantially hollow.” Neither Decuir nor Matteo discloses or suggests a conicular portion for a cam follower, let alone a substantially hollow conicular portion. Rather, Decuir discloses a cam follower having a substantially cylindrical, hollow form that does not taper to a conicular form toward the pushrod engaging surface and Matteo discloses a cam follower also lacking the tapered portion required by Applicants’ independent claim 1.

The Examiner appears to contend Matteo’s push rod is analogous to Applicants’ claimed cam follower. Applicants respectfully submit that a pushrod is not analogous in form or function to a cam follower and further that the teachings applicable to pushrods are not applicable to cam followers. Therefore, the pushrod taught by Matteo would not suggest to a person having ordinary skill in the art that a cam follower should, or could, taper into a hollow conicular shape.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of any combination of Decuir and Matteo and respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claim 1.

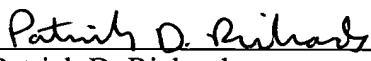
Claims 2 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Decuir in view of Matteo and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,589,384 to Ott ("Ott"). Applicants respectfully submit Ott teaches a socket (54) that tapers into a conical section and not a cam follower with a hollow, conicular pushrod engaging surface. Therefore, no combination of Decuir, Matteo and Ott renders Applicants' claims obvious. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claims 2 and 14.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the currently pending claims are in allowable form and that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination of the pending claims is requested. If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application and feels that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (312) 372-2000.

Respectfully submitted,

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